

RETREAT AND SESSHIN GUIDELINESS - GENERAL
Urban Nun ZENDO
2018-12-06

You may attend an entire retreat or Sesshin or only one day. However, in order to plan for meal attendance and Zendo occupancy, we kindly ask you to indicate, at the time of registration, the days of the retreat or Sesshin you will be attending.

Since we aim to create an environment of harmony and continuity during the retreat and Sesshin, we plan that you are able to attend all the activities you have signed up for. However, we realize that it may be necessary to take unplanned breaks in order to take care of yourself. We only ask you to inform teacher if you are unable to attend a meal or scheduled Zazen period, or if you need to leave Sesshin earlier than expected.

Once Zen training has begun, entering or leaving a Zendo is no longer allowed. You can use the Kinhin period for toilet breaks, but if you are too late for the next Zazen period, you must continue practicing in the Genkan until the next Kinhin starts, when you can re-join others in the walking line. At the end of the Kinhin you can reassume your place in Zendo again.

Depending on the type of retreat and Sesshin, meals are taken either in more traditional manner (adapted Oryoki style), or according to the situation. Whatever the case, food intake is expected to be perceived as a zen practice, mindfully and with full presence.

Since you will not stay overnight in Zendo, you may be destructed by your old habits after leaving Zendo. Please, try to escape this and do your best to get enough sleep at night. Don't consume stimulating substances; don't engage in parties and excessive talking and ask your family to give you some quite time during the retreat.

If you are sleepy or too excited by the stimulations, it will be difficult to sustain an intense level of Zazen and activity, and your practice will be either difficult or useless. If you feel you will be unable to remain awake during a Zazen period or a lecture, it may be best to take a break, but please, inform the teacher in advance.

If you have a communicable disease, please withdraw from the Sesshin or retreat. Colds and flu spread rapidly through a community that practices in a confined space with a demanding schedule. In kindness to all participants, including teacher, please don't bring an illness into the group even if you feel well enough to participate. No one wants to come down with something in the midst of Sesshin or retreat and miss the opportunity to practice.

Please observe the absolute silence during the Sesshin. If you need something or have a question after Sesshin has started, please leave a note for the teacher at

the entrance or give the note directly to the teacher. Otherwise, please do not read or write during the Sesshin, unless it is part of the practice. Retreat can be challenging in many ways. If you have any concerns about participating in it, please contact teacher.